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House of Representatives

The House met at 6 p.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

This evening as we gather, Lord God, we remember all those who gave us life. We remember those who enrich the life of this Nation with love and dedication, generosity and compassion. We recall the Members of this House and the dear members of family and friendship who have gone the way of all life on Earth.

May those who have preceded us in the ways of faith be rewarded for their just deeds and the lively peace and joy they brought to this world.

As we reflect upon those whose memory moves us this evening, especially those who have died during the 106th Congress, we seek the consolation You

alone can give and the insight born of faith.

Renewed in the bonds that unite us forever, grant us wisdom in the midst of present difficulties and the bright promise of a just reward on that day when all come to rejoice in You who live now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. NORWOOD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.J. Res. 123 and that I may

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WILLIAM M. THOMAS, *Chairman*.

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida? There was no objection.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of House Resolution 662, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 123) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of House Joint Resolution 123 is as follows:

H.J. RES. 123

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Public Law 106-275, is further amended by striking the date specified in section 106(c) and inserting "November 3, 2000".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 662, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume merely to point out that this is a 1-day continuing resolution. In addition to having this resolution before the House, after the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) makes his opening statement, I will be asking unanimous consent to consider an amendment that I have at the desk.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose there is virtually no reason for anyone to say anything, given what the reality is around here. But I would, nonetheless, like to make a few observations about why we are going through this surreal exercise this week, this evening, tomorrow and for God knows how long.

We were told at the beginning of the year by the majority party leadership that they were going to restore regular order to the House. Then this House proceeded to pass a phony budget resolution and a series of phony appropriation bills which pretended to fit within that budget resolution.

It did that, not because of any fault of any of the majority members of the Committee on Appropriations; we did it because they, in fact, had no choice but to proceed under that phony budget resolution.

The result is that, for 10 months, this House pretended to the public that it was going to spend about \$40 billion less than virtually everyone in this House on both sides of the aisle knew we would in the end wind up spending.

The purpose of passing those fraudulently shrunken appropriation bills was

to open up enough room in that phony budget so that the majority leadership could pretend that there was enough room in that budget for the huge tax cuts which they then proceeded to pass, the majority of benefits which went to those in our society who make \$300,000 a year or more.

The leadership of the majority preached bipartisanship; but in fact, they blocked bipartisan majorities from passing the Patients' Bill of Rights. They held the minimum wage hostage to tax benefits that were nine times as large as the benefits afforded to workers under those minimum wage increases. They even refused to reform the so-called Freedom to Farm Act, which is the single biggest failure of farm policy in this country since the days of Ezra Taft Benson, and that is going some.

Lastly, the leadership of the majority party blocked a bipartisan conference on the Labor, Health and Education bill that would have taken us a long way toward reducing class size, strengthening teacher training, providing larger Pell Grants for struggling middle-income families trying to send their kids to college, providing us some 5,000 additional after-school learning centers for kids so that they do not have to go home at night to an empty house because both parents are working outside the home.

Since that bill was blown up, it has been apparently the goal of the majority party leadership to leave without ever bringing to a vote that bipartisan conference report.

Apparently the majority caucus is split. I am told by a number of you that, if this bill goes into a lame-duck session, that there are a good number of our friends on the majority side who would like to scale back significantly the size of those education and other increases in that Labor-Health-Education bill.

In my judgment as someone who has served here for over 30 years, the chaotic results of the policy pursued by the leadership left us at the end of the fiscal year with only two of the 13 appropriation bills that were supposed to be passed actually being finished by the House and the Senate. The House passed all 13 of its appropriation bills, but the Senate did not.

So we were left with only two of those 13 bills. We were left with only two of those 13 bills passed. Both bills that were passed had been signed by the President. So none of the delays associated with the other 11 bills were in any way the responsibility of the White House.

Now, the majority leadership wants to go home. We all want to go home.

I will say to the gentleman interrupting that no one in this House has worked harder than I have. I will compare my record to yours anytime.

I think I have the floor, Mr. Speaker. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair requests that various conversations going around the Chamber will be removed to the cloakroom.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for obtaining order, and I thank most Members of the House for their courtesy.

What I was about to say is that the majority leadership would like us to go home, and we would all like to go home, but there is apparently a significant difference between the wishes of the majority leadership in the Senate and the majority leadership here.

I honestly believe that you want us in the minority to give you cover for your failure to produce on the whole range of legislative items by voting to get Congress out of town before we have all done our duty. I think that duty includes passing the Patients' Bill of Rights, passing a bill that provides prescription drugs under Medicare, passing a bill that provides the minimum wage increase for the least among us.

So now we are caught in what one reporter today called this Potemkin charade. It is being pretended that there is work being done here because, apparently, what the majority leadership wants to do is to keep the lights on even though the House is empty and keep the lights on to pretend that there is activity in the kitchen, when in fact there is not. The stove is off. The oven is empty. The oven is cold.

No major legislation, save perhaps one water project bill is in the works. What an unhappy, pitiful end to this session.

I want to say to my friends on the majority side of the aisle, I like and respect virtually every single one of you. Some of you I do not know as well as others. But when I think of the people I have known in my life, there is no more decent person than the gentleman sitting in the front row here, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), or the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) or the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) or the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) or a number of others of you. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) I saw sitting here; we have been friends for years. I cherish some of the friendships that I have had with people on both sides of the aisle.

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But what I despise is what this kind of chaotic governance in this House has done to this institution and to the legislative process. And most of all what I despise is what this House has failed to do to represent and help the people we are supposed to be representing. When I see what this institution has failed to do, that is when I am truly saddened and appalled.

I do not make this statement out of any sense of personal dislike for any one of you. But sometimes parties or institutions do things collectively which they would never do individually, and I believe this year that has happened in this place. And that is why